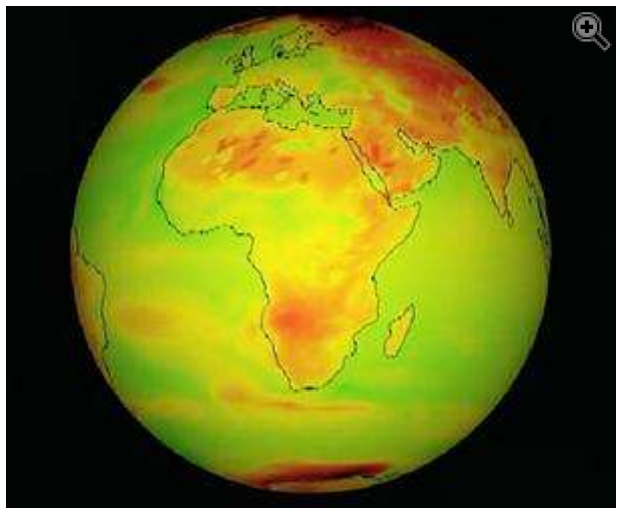
International stage for Met Office scientists

24 October 2011 - Met Office science will play a central role at an international event attracting hundreds of climate scientists from all over the world.



The Open Science Conference of the World Climate Research Programme is one of the biggest events of its kind.

Held this week in Denver, Colorado, it will cover all aspects of understanding and predicting climate and deliver a comprehensive assessment of global research on the subject.

Peter Stott, Head of Climate Monitoring and Attribution at the Met Office, will be delivering a keynote talk on continuing research into how climate change is affecting extreme weather.

The research, being coordinated by the Attribution of Climate-related Events (ACE) initiative, aims to develop the science to give authoritative explanations of the causes of severe weather.

Speaking before the conference, he said: "It's often said that an individual event like a heatwave or a flood cannot be attributed to climate change, but is consistent with what we'd expect under a warming climate.

"ACE aims to move beyond this conflicting message by quickly providing an objective appraisal of how human influence has altered the odds of individual events occurring."

Adam Scaife, Head of Monthly to Decadal Forecasting at the Met Office, will give a second keynote talk at the conference.

He will talk about global long range forecasting - a rapidly developing area of science in which the Met Office is a world leader.

"We have made some great strides in understanding the science behind long-range forecasting over the past few years," he said. "That's been shown in the success of our forecasts of the El Nino/La Nina cycle and its impacts worldwide as well as our long range forecasts of Atlantic hurricanes.

"There is still work to do on capturing the complexity of the Earth's climate system in computer modelling to enable even better forecasting. Working with international partners will allow us to continue that progress."

Several other Met Office scientists will be attending the event to discuss the latest findings in Met Office and international research in key areas of climate science.

It is hoped the conference will identify some of the biggest challenges facing climate researchers and offer strategic input into the IPCC's Fifth Assessment report - which is set to be the most comprehensive study of climate change ever undertaken.

International research collaboration and knowledge sharing is a key part of the Met Office's work.

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